follow Nigeria and Venezuela in cutting the output and in conformity to the practice of US, some countries may also follow in restricting the output;

(b) if so, whether it will not affect us; and

(c) what are the measures envisaged to safeguard the price level of petroleum products in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA J. PATEL): (a) and (b) The Government has no official intimation. However, the volatility in the prices of crude and petroleum products does impact the "country's economy.

(c) In view of the steep increase in international oil prices, the Government elucidated the principle which would govern its policy of containing the burden of increase in international prices on consumers of sensitive petroleum products. It was decided that the burden would be equitably shared by consumers, the Government and the oil companies. The major part of the impact of the international price increase has not been passed on to consumers of sensitive products. There has been no increase in the price of PDS kerosene since March 2002, and no increase in the price of domestic LPG since November 2004. The prices of petrol and diesel have been reduced from midnight of 29th November 2006.

Exploration of new reserves

2988. SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that new oil/gas reserves have been found this year as a result of exploration by public/private explorations;

(b) if so, the details thereof indicating the extent of reserves of each finding; and

(c) the steps taken or being taken for exploration thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DJNSHA J. PATEL): (a) to (c) Twleve new oil and gas discoveries have been made by Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Limited (ONGC), Oil India Limited (OIL) and Private/Joint Venture (JV) companies in the current financial year 2006-07. ONGC have made three gas discoveries

viz. Deloli in Cambay basin, Adichapuram in Cauvery onland and KG-DW-S01 in KG deep water. OIL have made two oil/gas discoveries at Baghjan and Shanti in tinsukia district of Assam. Private JV companies have made seven discoveries *viz.* Block RJ-ON-90/6 Rajasthan, Block CB-ONN-2000/ 1 Gujarat, four in Eastern offshore areas in Blocks KG-DWN-98/2, KG-OSN-2001/3, KG-DWN-98/3 and KG-OSN-2001/1 and one in Western offshore Block SWP-1. These new discoveries are under different stages of appraisal through data acquisition, processing and interpretation of data as well as drilling of appraisal wells.

Doping of Diesel with Non-Edible Oil

2989. SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are planning o dope diesel with non-edible oil extracted from plants like Jatropha to cut imports;

(b) if so, whether a specific entity of "Public-Private-Panchayat-Partnership" is being evolved for this purpose;

(c) what percentage of non-edible oil from plants will be mixed initially; and

(d) whether its use will require any modification in the automobile engines?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA J. PATEL): (a) and (b) Non-edible oils extracted from plants like Jatropha cannot be mixed directly with diesel. However diesel can be doped with bio diesel which is made by a chemical process called transesterification of vegetable oils with methanol. It is not contemplated to involve private lands owners/farmers in the activities at this stage.

(c) In the first phase 5% bio diesel is proposed to be mixed with diesel.

(d) 5% bio-diesel blended with diesel does not require any modification in the automobile engines.